

3-03 [Property Maintenance Code]

3-03.01 [Introductory Provisions]

3-03.01-10 [Short Title]

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Property Maintenance Code.

3-03.01-20 [Purpose]

The Council finds and declares that conditions that promote blight and deterioration or that create a hazard to the health and safety of any person, are injurious to the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

3-03.01-30 [Scope]

This chapter is to:

- A. Protect the public health, safety and general welfare by regulating the exterior conditions of existing structures and existing premises by establishing minimum requirements and standards for exterior conditions of structures and premises for the protection from the elements, life safety, other hazards, and for safe and sanitary maintenance;
- B. Establish the responsibility of property owners; and
- C. Provide for administration, enforcement and penalties.

3-03.01-40 [Intent]

This chapter shall be construed to secure and ensure the health, safety and general welfare of the public insofar as they are affected by the continued occupancy and maintenance of structures and premises. Existing structures and premises that do not comply with these provisions shall be altered or repaired to provide a minimum level of health, safety and maintenance as required herein.

3-03.01-50 [Definitions]

Words stated in the present tense include the future; the singular number includes the plural and the plural the singular. Where terms are not defined in this chapter or other Code sections and are defined in the State Building, Plumbing or Mechanical Codes, such terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them as in those codes. Where terms are not defined through the methods authorized by this section, such terms shall have ordinarily accepted meanings such as the context implies. Whenever the words “premises,” “building” or other similar words are stated in this chapter, they shall be construed as though they were followed by the words “or any part thereof.” Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following terms shall, for the purposes of this chapter, have the following meanings:

- A. “Abandoned Structure” means a vacant structure, or portion thereof, that is an attractive nuisance to children at play, or that is used for unlawful activity or that is otherwise unoccupied and untended.
- B. “Attractive Nuisance” means any attractive nuisance which may prove detrimental to children whether in or on a building, on the premises of a building, or upon an un-occupied lot, which is left in any place exposed or accessible to children. This includes unused or abandoned refrigerators, freezers, or other large appliances or equipment or any parts thereof, abandoned motor vehicles; any structurally unsound or unsafe fence or edifice, any unsecured or abandoned excavation, pit, well, cistern, storage or shaft; or any lumber, trash, debris or vegetation which may prove a hazard for minors.

- C.** “Boarded Building” means an unoccupied or derelict building that has been secured against entry by material such as plywood, boards or other similar material placed over openings that are designed for and/or are required for windows and doors, and which is visible off the premises and is not both lawful and customary to install on an occupied structure.
- D.** “Building” means any structure occupied or intended for any occupancy.
- E.** “Building Code” means Building Codes adopted by Columbia County and the City of Vernonia.
- F.** “Building Official” means the building official of Columbia County or the building official’s designee.
- G.** “Deterioration” means a lowering in quality of the condition or appearance of a building, structure or parts thereof characterized by holes, breaks, rot, crumbling, cracking, peeling, rusting, or any other evidence of physical decay, neglect, excessive use, or lack of maintenance.
- H.** “Imminent Hazard” means a condition that places a person’s life, health, or property in high risk of peril when such condition is immediate or impending.
- I.** “Legal Owner” means any person recorded in the official records of the State, County or municipality as holding title to the premises.
- J.** “Administrator” means the City Administrator or the Administrator’s designee.
- K.** “Owner” means any legal owner or any person having charge, care or control of a premises.
- L.** “Partially Constructed” means an occupied or vacant structure, or portion thereof, that has been left in a state of partial construction for more than six (6) months or after the expiration of any building permit, or that has not had a required permit inspection within any six (6) month period.
- M.** “Person” means an individual, corporation, partnership or any other group or entity.
- N.** “Premises” means a lot, plot or parcel of land including any structure thereon.
- O.** “Skilled Manner” means executed in a skilled manner; i.e., generally plumb, level, square, in line, undamaged, without marring adjacent work and completed in conformance with generally accepted construction and maintenance practices.
- P.** “Structure” means that which is built or constructed or a portion thereof.
- Q.** “Unoccupied” means not being used for a lawful occupancy.